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S O L O M O N.

AN

O R A T O R I O.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

SOLOMON.
ZADOK, the High-Priest.
A Levite.

Chorus of Priests.
Chorus of Israelites.

W O M E N.

NICAULE, Queen of Sheba.
First Harlot.

Second Harlot.

PART I. SCENE I.

Solomon, Zadok, Levites, Israelites, &c.

C H O R U S.

FROM the censer curling rise
Grateful incense to the skies;
Heaven blesses David's throne;
Happy, happy Solomon!

2 C H O R U S.

Live, live for ever, pious David's son;
Live, live for ever, mighty Solomon.

Sol. Prais'd be the Lord, from him my wisdom
springs;
I bow enraptur'd to the King of kings.

A I R.

When the sun gives brightest day,
Golden features, cheering creatures,
Till he westward dies away,
He shall ever hear me sing
Praises to th' eternal King.

Da Capo.

Lev. Great prince, thy resolution's just,
He never fails, in Heav'n who puts his trust;
True worth consists not in the pride of state;
'Tis virtue only makes a monarch great.

A I R.

Thrice bless'd that wise discerning king,
Who can each passion tame,
And mount on virtue's eagle wing
To everlasting fame.

Such shall as mighty patterns stand,
To princes yet unborn;
To honour prompt each distant land,
And future times adorn.

SCENE II.

Solomon, Levite, &c. *To them an Attendant.*

Atten. My sovereign liege, two women stand,
And both beseech the king's command
To enter here; dissolv'd in tears
The one a new-born infant bears;
The other, fierce, and threat'ning loud,
Declares her story to the crowd;
And thus she clamours to the throng,
"Seek we the king, he shall redress our wrong."

Sol. Admit them straight, for when we mount a
throne,
Our hours are all the people's, not our own.

A I R.

Wise, great and good,
Above thy years endu'd,
How bright each grace does shine,
Thus bless'd with what's divine.
Firm as a rock thy strength shall stand,
Thy wisdom ever bless the land.

SCENE III.

To them the two Harlots.

1 Har. Thou son of David, hear a mother's grief;
And let the voice of justice bring relief.

This little babe my womb conceiv'd,
 The smiling infant I with joy receiv'd.
 That woman also bore a son,
 Whose vital thread was quickly spun:
 One house we both together kept,
 But once, unhappy! as I slept,
 She stole at midnight where I lay,
 Bore my soft darling from my arms away,
 And left her child behind, a lump of lifeless clay;
 And now, O impious! dares to claim
 My right alone, a mother's name.

T R I O.

1 *Har.* Words are weak to paint my fears;
 Heart-felt anguish, starting tears,
 Best shall plead a mother's cause.
 To thy throne, O king, I bend,
 My cause is just, be thou my friend.

2 *Har.* False is all her melting tale.

Sol. Justice holds the lifted scale.

2 *Har.* Then be just, and fear the laws.

Sol. What says the other to th' imputed charge?
 Speak in thy turn, and tell thy wrongs at large.

2 *Har.* I cannot varnish o'er my tongue,
 And colour fair the face of wrong:
 This babe is mine, the womb of earth
 Intomb'd, conceals her little birth:
 Give me my child, my smiling boy,
 To cheer my breast with new-born joy.

Sol. Hear me, ye women, and the king regard,
 Who from his throne thus reads the just award:
 Each claims alike, let both their portions share,
 Divide the babe, thus each her part shall bear.
 Quick, bring the falchion, and the infant smite,
 Nor farther clamour for disputed right.

A I R.

2 *Har.* Thy sentence, great king,
 Is prudent and wise,
 And my hopes on the wing,
 Quick bound for the prize:
 Contented I hear,
 And approve the decree;
 For at least I shall rear
 The lov'd infant from thee.

1 *Har.* Withhold, withhold the executing hand;
 Reverse, O king, thy stern command.

A I R.

Can I see my infant gor'd
 With the fierce relentless sword?
 Can I see him yield his breath,
 Smiling at the hand of death,
 And behold the purple tides
 Gushing down his tender sides?
 Rather be my hopes beguil'd,
 Take him all—but spare my child.

Sol. Israel, attend to what your king shall say;
 Think not I meant the innocent to slay.
 The stern decision was to trace with art
 The secret dictates of the human heart.
 She who could bear the fierce decree to hear,
 Nor send one sigh, nor shed one pious tear,
 Must be a stranger to a mother's name—
 Hence from my sight, nor urge a farther claim:
 But you whose fears a parent's love attest,
 Receive, and bind him to your beating breast;
 To you, in justice, I the babe restore,
 And may you lose him from your arms no more.

D U E T.

1 *Har.* Thrice blest'd be the king, for he's virtuous
 and wife,

Sol. The Lord all these blessings has giv'n;

1 *Har.* My gratitude calls streaming tears from my
 eyes,

Sol. Thy thanks be return'd all to Heav'n.

'Tis God that rewards, and will lift from the dust
 Whom to crush proud oppressors endeavour;

1 *Har.* How happy are those who in God put their
 trust!

Sol. For his mercy endureth for ever.

Chorus of Israelites.

From the east unto the west,
 Who so wise as Solomon?
 Who like Israel's king is blest'd?
 Who so worthy of a throne?

P A R T II. S C E N E I.

Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Zadok, and Chorus.

Queen of Sheba.

FROM Arabia's spicy shores,
 Bounded by the hoary main,
 Sheba's queen these seats explores,
 To be taught thy heav'nly strain.

A I R.

To view the wonders of thy throne,
 She comes to all the world made known;
 Where ev'ry thing that clear the sight,
 Or soothes the ear gives due delight.

Sol. Thrice welcome queen, with open arms;
 Our court receives thee, and thy charms;
 The temple of the Lord first meets your eyes,
 Rich with the well-accepted sacrifice.

Here all our treasures free behold,
 Where cedars lie, o'erwrought with gold:
 Next view a mansion fit for kings to own,
 The forest call'd of tow'ring Lebanon;
 Where art her utmost skill displays,
 And ev'ry object claims your praise.

A I R.

Queen of Sheba.

Ev'ry sight these eyes behold,
 Does a different charm unfold;
 Flashing gems, and sculptur'd gold,
 Still attract my ravish'd sight:
 But to hear fair truth distilling,
 In expressions choice and thrilling
 From that tongue, so soft and killing,
 That my soul does most delight.

Sol. Sweep, sweep the string, to soothe the royal fair,
 And rouse each passion with th' alternate air.

A I R.

Music, spread thy voice around,
 Sweetly flow the lulling sound.

C H O R U S.

Music, spread, &c.

A I R.

Now a different measure try,
 Shake the dome, and pierce the sky.
 Rouse us next to martial deeds;
 Clanking arms, and neighing steeds,
 Seem in fury to oppose—
 Now the hard-fought battle glows,

C H O R U S.

Now a different measure try, &c.

RECITATIVE.

Then at once from rage remove;
Draw the tear from hopeless love;
Lengthen out the solemn air,
Full of death and wild despair.

CHORUS.

Draw the tear, &c.

A I R.

Sad solemn sound, O, ease my breast,
Mourn my lost love,
Then silent prove,
Grieve like my soul, and be at rest.

RECITATIVE.

Next the tortur'd soul release,
And the mind restore to peace.

A I R.

Beneath the vine or fig-tree's shade,
Ev'ry shepherd sings the maid,
Who his simple heart betray'd,
In a rustic measure.

While of torment he complains,
All around the village swains
Catch the song and feel his pains,
Mingling sighs with pleasure.

CHORUS.

Beneath the vine, &c.

RECITATIVE.

Love, from such a parent sprung,
In spite of adverse fate is strong,
In spite of time is ever young.
But how weak and brittle prove,
The ties of mercenary love!

A I R and CHORUS.

Love from such, &c.

A I R.

Thus rolling surges rise,
And plough the troubled main;
But soon the tempest dies,
And all is calm again.

CHORUS.

Thus rolling, &c.

PART III. SCENE I.

Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Zadok, and Chorus.

RECITATIVE.

Sol. AGES to come shall hail these happy days,
That brought you here, thou fairest of the
fair.

Let choice delights our moments now employ,
Sacred to love, to harmony and joy.

A I R.

Haste to the cedar-grove,
Where fragrant spices bloom,
And am'rous turtle's love,
Beneath the pleasing gloom.
While tinkling down the hill,
Avoiding hateful day;
The little murmur'ing rill,
In whispers glides away.

Da Capo.

A I R.

Queen of Sheba.

This music is divine, O king,
All, all obey the artist's string,

All that I see gives vast delight,
All charm the ear or please the sight;
Here grateful odours ever dwell,
And sweetest balsams fragrant smell. *Da Capo.*

Accompaniment.

But when the temple I behold,
Blazing with glare of gems and gold,
Divinely bright; my wond'ring eye,
Sees not so great beneath the sky.
The stars themselves cannot afford,
A nobler mansion for Heav'n's Lord,
Where with unwear'd zeal you sing,
The praises of th' eternal King.

A I R.

Lew. Pious king, and virtuous queen,
May your names resound in story;
In time's latest annals seen,
Crown'd with honour, crown'd with glory!

Zad. Thrice happy king, to have achiev'd
What scarce will henceforth be believ'd:
When seven times around the sphere,
The sun had led the new-born year.
The temple rose to mark thy days
With endless themes for future praise.
Our pious David wish'd, in vain,
By this great act to bless his reign;
But Heav'n the monarch's hopes withstood,
For ah! his hands were stain'd with blood.

A I R.

Golden columns, fair and bright,
Catch the mortal's ravish'd sight;
Round their sides ambitious, twine
Tendrils of the clasping vine:
Cherubims stand there display'd,
O'er the ark their wings are laid:
Ev'ry object swells with state;
All is pious, all is great.

CHORUS.

1 Chorus. Praise the Lord with harp and tongue;
Praise him all ye old and young,
He's in mercy ever strong.

2 Chorus. Praise the Lord thro' ev'ry state;
Praise him early, praise him late;
God alone is good and great.

Full CHORUS.

Let the loud Hosannahs rise
Widely spreading thro' the skies,
God alone is just and wise.

Sol. Gold now is common on our happy shore,
And cedars frequent are as sycamore;
All, all conspires to bless my days;
Fair plenty does her treasure raise,
And o'er the fruitful plains her countless gifts
displays.

A I R.

How green our fertile pastures look!
How fair our olive groves!
How limpid is the gliding brook
That thro' the meadows roves!
An hundred different balmy flows
Salute the passing gale,
When ev'ning breezes fan the bow'rs,
And sweep th' enamel'd vale.

Queen of Sheba.

May peace in Salem ever dwell
Illustrious Solomon, farewell:
Thy wise instructions be my future care,
Soft as the show'rs that cheer the vernal air;

Whose warmth bids ev'ry plant her sweets disclose,
The lily wakes, and paints the op'ning rose.

A I R.

Will the sun forget to streak
Eastern skies with amber ray,
When the dusky shades to break
He unbars the gates of day?

Then demand if Sheba's queen
E'er can banish from her thought
All the splendor she has seen,
All the knowledge thou hast taught.

Sol. Adieu, fair queen, and in thy breast
May peace and virtue ever rest!

D U E T.

Queen. Ev'ry joy that wisdom knows,
May'st thou, pious monarch, share!

Sol. Ev'ry blessing Heav'n bestows,
Be thy portion, virtuous fair!

Queen. Gently flow thy rolling days.

Sol. Sorrow be a stranger here.

Both. May thy people sound thy praise,
Praise unbought by price or fear!

G R A N D C H O R U S.

The name of the wicked shall quickly be past;
But the fame of the just shall eternally last.



7 MA 55